

GOLDEN GAZETTE

A Monthly Newspaper for Senior Adults in the Fairfax Area

FEBRUARY 2005

Serving Seniors for 28 Years

VOL. 28, NO. 10

Muddled Over Minerals: Myths About Iron, Calcium, and Potassium

by Granger Benson, M.D.

Minerals are inorganic elements found in both living and nonliving things. The body contains numerous minerals that are important for physiological function. Unfortunately, many people have mistaken beliefs about minerals and health. Let's take a look at common misconceptions about three of the most important minerals we need: iron, calcium, and potassium.

Myth #1: Iron-poor blood is a common problem among seniors.

Somehow the marketers of vitamin and mineral supplements have created the impression that low iron intake is a common cause of poor energy, and that iron supplements are important for good general health. Besides being largely untrue, this belief can have harmful consequences. Here's the explanation.

Iron is an essential component of the hemoglobin in red blood cells. The major consequence of iron depletion is anemia. Fortunately, the body is very efficient at storing and retaining iron, so that iron depletion in seniors and in men of any age is usually caused by blood loss, not by poor

Cont. p. 11

Do You Know the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack?

A heart attack is a frightening event, and you probably don't want to think about it. But, if you learn the signs of a heart attack and what steps to take, you can save a life—maybe your own.

What are the signs of a heart attack? Many people think a heart attack is sudden and intense, like a "movie" heart attack, where a person clutches his or her chest and falls over. The truth is that many heart attacks start slowly, as mild pain or discomfort. If you feel such a symptom, you may not be sure what's wrong. Your symptoms may even come and go. Even those who have had a heart attack before may not recognize their symptoms, because the next attack can have entirely different ones. Women may not think they're at risk of having a heart attack—but they are. (*Learn more about women and heart attacks on page 7.*)

It's vital that everyone learn these warning signs of a heart attack:

■ **Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.

Cont. p. 7

This is an abridged version with links to senior centers and county tours. Policy prohibits publishing the ads that are included in the print version.

If you would like to receive the print version on a monthly basis, please e-mail kathy.wilson@fairfaxcounty.gov. Large-print and recorded formats also are available. It's free!

COA February Meeting at Different Location

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging will meet on February 16, at the Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Room 505, Fairfax. See page 2 for details.

GOLDEN GAZETTE

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Department of Family Services

FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING

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Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

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The *Golden Gazette* is a free, monthly newspaper dedicated to serving persons age 60 and over in Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

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ADDRESS ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the *Golden Gazette* accepts limited paid advertisements, reader contributions are critical to ensure continuation of the publication. We are very grateful to all of you who do send contributions, regardless of the amount (the average contribution is about \$7.00). ***Please note that contributions are entirely voluntary.***

If you have an address change, are receiving duplicates, or if you would like to make a contribution, please complete the form below and mail to: ***Golden Gazette, Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.*** Checks should be made payable to **Fairfax County**. Please list your current address below or attach your mailing label and check the appropriate lines. If you prefer to call about address changes, the number is **703-324-5633**.

____ Contribution check attached.
____ I am NOT currently on your mailing list. Please add my name and address.
____ I am already on your mailing list.
____ I am moving. My new address in the Fairfax area will be:
NAME _____
CURRENT ADDRESS _____ Zip: _____
NEW ADDRESS (if applicable) _____ Zip: _____
TELEPHONE (in case we have a question) _____

Publication of advertising contained herein does not constitute endorsement.



To comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, the *Golden Gazette* is available in large-print and recorded formats. Call **703-324-5633** to request an alternative format.

The names and addresses of persons receiving the *Golden Gazette* are subject to disclosure pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, VA Code Sec. 2.1-340 thru 346.1. Inquiries or complaints concerning this policy should be directed to the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, #708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging contracts with Southern Maryland Printing in Waldorf, MD, for printing and mailing services.

Location Change for Commission on Aging Meeting

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) will meet on **February 16, at 1:00 p.m.**, at the Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Room 505, Fairfax. A public comment period is held at the beginning of each meeting. (Note: The COA meets on the third Wednesday of each month, **except August.**)

Call **703-324-7746** for information or to be placed on the mailing list. If you need a sign language interpreter or any special accommodation or auxiliary aid, please call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at **703-324-5411** (voice) or **703-449-1186** (TTY) at least five working days in advance of the meeting. There is no charge for these services.

DEADLINES

ALWAYS the first of the month a month in advance (for ads, ad payments, and announcements)

Issue

March

April

May

Due Date

February 1

March 1

April 1

ROTH CONVERSIONS BECOME MORE ATTRACTIVE FOR RETIREES

provided by Tim Murray, CFP®

Retirees who have wanted to convert sizable traditional individual retirement accounts into Roth IRAs but weren't eligible because of income restrictions may find 2005 the year to make the conversion.

Starting in 2005, an obscure provision in a 1998 federal tax act allows retirees age 70½ or older to exclude from their income the required minimum distributions from traditional IRAs when determining conversion eligibility. Consequently, conversions should become a possibility for some retirees.

To understand how this all works, let's quickly compare traditional and Roth IRAs. A traditional IRA is funded with pretax dollars, it grows tax deferred, and withdrawals are taxed at the owner's ordinary income tax rate. Furthermore, the owner must begin taking minimum mandatory withdrawals after turning 70½. These minimum withdrawals eventually drain the IRA account.

A Roth IRA is funded with after-tax dollars and grows tax deferred. Withdrawals are tax free, as long as the account has been open for at least five years and the owner is 59½ or older. Furthermore—and this is the key for affluent retirees—there are no mandatory distributions beginning at age 70½. It can be left untouched until death and passed on income-tax free to heirs.

This makes Roth IRAs especially attractive to retirees who may want to pass IRAs on to their heirs or who may want to conserve IRA assets until much later in life to pay for such things as high medical or long-term care expenses. So, if you have traditional IRAs, you may want to convert them to Roth IRAs. The catch is that you have to pay income taxes on the amount you convert, and you can't convert in a year in which your modified adjusted gross income (AGI) (before the conversion) exceeds \$100,000. That's where the 1998 provision helps. Those required withdrawals often are a significant source of income for affluent retirees—even if they don't need the money at that time. Until now, those mandatory withdrawals counted toward the modified AGI. But starting in 2005, they won't.

Assume that you earn \$70,000 in non-IRA income, you are age 72, and you have \$800,000

in a traditional IRA. Your required minimum distribution for that IRA is \$31,250. Because your total modified AGI is \$101,250, you wouldn't qualify for a Roth conversion in 2004. But you would qualify in 2005 because that \$31,250 no longer counts toward the \$100,000 conversion limit.

But even if you now qualify for a conversion, you need to weigh other factors in deciding whether to convert. First, all that money that comes out of the traditional IRA for a conversion will count as income for that year, and may push you into a higher tax bracket. You could end up with a hefty tax bill.

On the other hand, some tax experts argue tax rates are not likely to go any lower, and some believe that they may rise in the future to offset the growing federal deficit. So it may be a matter of "gettin' while the gettin's good."

It's best if you can afford to pay that tax bill with money from outside the IRA withdrawal. That allows you to roll the full amount into the Roth IRA. Other tax factors include the conversion's impact on state income taxes and the alternative minimum tax, so you'll want to work closely with a tax expert.

Are potential creditor lawsuits a risk for you? Federal law does not shield IRAs from creditors. Many states do, but not all include Roth IRAs in that protection, so you may want to see what your state's laws are before converting.

Finally, keep in mind that if you do convert, you have until October 15 of the year after the conversion to switch back to the way things were (your conversion tax will be refunded). You will want to do this if your income for the conversion year unexpectedly exceeds \$100,000. You also may want to consider reconverting if the value of your new Roth has dropped substantially since the conversion. You would reconvert to a traditional IRA, wait 30 days, and convert again with the lower account value (thus incurring lower conversion taxes than you incurred in the original conversion).

Source: This column is produced by the Financial Planning Association, the membership organization for the financial planning community, and is provided by: Tim Murray, CFP®, CSA, with Capital Planning & Investments in Fairfax, Virginia.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

One of the best ways to spend your time is to volunteer. Everyone benefits from volunteering. The agencies receive the help they need, and the volunteers receive satisfaction from helping others.

Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO) serves needy families in the Springfield and Burke areas by providing food, clothing, household items, and financial assistance. They need volunteers to receive, sort, and distribute donations and food; provide office assistance at their Springfield office; and provide counseling to families. Schedules are flexible (day or evening). Call John Gauthier at **703-451-7955**.

The **Inova Fair Oaks Hospital Thrift Shop** needs volunteers in the Fairfax Circle shop to sort donations, operate the cash register, price and shelve items, and assist customers. Call **703-391-3659**.

The **Meals on Wheels** program needs volunteers to deliver meals to clients in the Fairfax area. The job involves picking up meals at specified sites between 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. and ensuring that the meals are delivered to the clients, usually by 1:00 p.m. Drivers may choose to deliver meals weekly, biweekly, monthly, or to substitute as needed. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

The **Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman** program, which advocates for the welfare of people living in nursing and assisted living facilities, needs volunteers to help with data entry, list maintenance, and clerical tasks. Knowledge of MS Word and Excel and strong English skills are helpful. The time commitment is 5 hours/week in Fairfax. Call **703-324-5435**.

The **Volunteer Home Services for Seniors** program needs volunteers in the Route 1 area to provide transportation for seniors. In the Falls Church area, volunteers are needed for a variety of jobs, including grocery shopping, light housework, yard work, and providing

transportation. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

To have a volunteer opportunity considered for this column, e-mail or fax your submission to **Retha Lockhart** by the first of the month one month in advance.

E-mail:

retha.lockhart@fairfaxcounty.gov

Fax: 703-449-8689

Phone: 703-324-5407

LUNCH N' LIFE Program

March 1, 2005

ANNANDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale

Speaker: Sandy Northrop

*Producer of Documentary Films
for Public Television*

Lunch \$5/person

For Reservations call

Ravensworth Baptist Church

by February 22

703 941-4113



Happy Valentine's Day

Medicare Cardiovascular Screening Tests

Beginning January 1, 2005, under the Medi-care Modernization Act of 2003, Medicare beneficiaries are now able to receive screening blood tests for cardiovascular disease at no cost at least once every five years. These tests will be covered by Medicare Part B *only*, when ordered by a physician who is treating the beneficiary. The purpose of these tests is early detection of cardiovascular disease among those who are not showing any symptoms or signs of the disease.

What Tests Are Included?

Blood screening tests for cardiovascular disease include:

- A cholesterol test to measure the beneficiary's total cholesterol level, HDL cholesterol level, and triglyceride level, to be performed after a 12-hour fasting period.
- Possibly other blood tests for signs of an elevated risk for cardiovascular disease. (To date, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services has not announced what these other tests will be.)

How Much Do These Tests Cost?

The tests will be free to the beneficiary. There will be no deductible or copayments for these tests.

How Often Can Beneficiaries Receive These Tests?

Medicare Part B will cover these tests, without any charge to beneficiaries, at least once every five years.

Need More Information?

Call the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) for more information at **703-324-5851**.

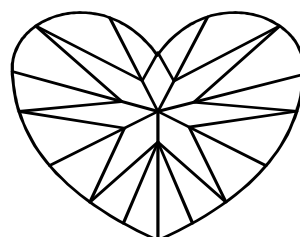
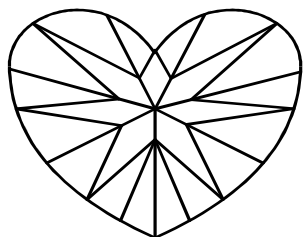
RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)

The Campagna Center's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) matches the personal interests and skills of persons 55+ with opportunities to help solve community problems. RSVP serves almost all of Northern Virginia and invites you to join. Advantages include:

- Free accident insurance, plus supplemental auto and personal liability insurance (while volunteering or en route)
- Partial travel reimbursement, if requested (maximum \$20 per month)
- Recognition and social events
- Frequent trips
- Quarterly newsletter.

From shelf readers in libraries through assistants in crime labs, there is a perfect volunteer position for RSVP members. RSVP volunteers can be found in places such as Mt. Vernon, the Smithsonian, the Kennedy Center, as well as at special events. In addition, RSVP oversees three major projects: the Northern Virginia Senior Environment Corps, a project focused on habitat and outreach; the Grandfathers Group, a mentoring project for African American boys ages 6 to 12; and an elementary school tutoring project that matches RSVP volunteers with students in grades 1 through 3. There is truly something for everyone, and RSVP will help you make the perfect volunteer connection.

For more information or to join, call **703-549-1607** or send an e-mail to rsvpcamp@aol.com.



You Can Make A Difference!

If you are empathetic, diplomatic, a good communicator and enjoy meeting people, we have an opportunity for you!

The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program's dedicated volunteers play a key role in providing advocacy services to residents of long-term care facilities in the region. The volunteer is assigned to a specific nursing home or assisted living facility in their community and makes weekly visits. The ombudsman works with the residents, their families, and the staff of the facility to ensure that the residents' rights are being protected.

The training for prospective volunteer ombudsmen is scheduled for **April 18, 19, and 29, 2005, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** each day. Applicants must successfully complete the training session and must be available to volunteer 4 hours per week, during regular business hours for a year. Applicants must not be employed by a long-term care facility. **Interviews of prospective ombudsmen will be held in February and March.**

The ombudsman empowers residents to speak up on their own behalf, and helps them to address problems within the facility that they cannot resolve alone. The ombudsman also intervenes with the staff for residents who have dementia and/or lack the ability to communicate. Some of the issues that volunteers have handled include: inadequate help to eat or drink; staff shortages; food quality or choice; inadequate hygiene care; nurse-calling devices out of reach; lack of meaningful or appropriate activities; building safety hazards, etc.

The Ombudsman Program is primarily funded by the Area Agencies on Aging of five local jurisdictions (Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William) and was established to investigate complaints made about community-based long-term care services.

For further information and an application, please call **703-324-5435** or visit the Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ombudsman.

FAIRFAX AREA COMMISSION ON AGING MEMBER ROSTER

AT LARGE

Fran McWhorter

Home: 703-266-2767; Fax: 703-266-7179

e-mail: FRAN-VAL@COX.NET

BRADDOCK DISTRICT

Tena Bluhm

Home: 703-978-9468

e-mail: raybjr@aol.com

DRANESVILLE DISTRICT

Elly Doyle, Chair

Home: 703-759-4541; Fax: 703-759-6020

e-mail address: ellydoyle1@cox.net

CITY OF FAIRFAX

Anita F. Kapper

Home: 703-273-1629; Work: 703-273-5178

Fax: 703-273-1629

e-mail: odas001@covad.net

CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

Jerry Ziskind

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e-mail: jaziskind@yahoo.com

HUNTER MILL DISTRICT

Robert A. Gehring, Vice Chair

Home: 703-264-0186; Fax: 703-264-1448

e-mail: rgehring9@comcast.net

LEE DISTRICT

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MASON DISTRICT

Jacob C. "Jack" Fritz

Home: 703-820-4052

e-mail: a-labas@att.net

MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

George T. Myers

Home: 703-780-4174

e-mail: georgetm@msn.com

PROVIDENCE DISTRICT

Lilyan J. Spero

Home: 703-560-3442

SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

Sally S. Hottle

Home: 703-644-0641; Fax: 703-644-3182

e-mail: grandmere@compuserve.com

SULLY DISTRICT

Ian N. Kremer

Home: 703-318-0148

e-mail: ian.kremer@alz.org

■ **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

■ **Shortness of breath.** Often comes along with chest discomfort. But it also can occur before chest discomfort.

■ **Other symptoms.** May include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

Learn the signs—but also remember: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, you still should have it checked out. Fast action can save lives—maybe your own.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute,
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/index.htm>.

How to Reduce Your Risk of a Heart Attack

You can reduce your risk of having a heart attack—even if you already have coronary heart disease or have had a previous heart attack. The key is to follow 6 steps to prevent or control your heart disease risk factors:

1. **Stop smoking**
2. **Lower high blood pressure**
3. **Reduce high blood cholesterol**
4. **Aim for a healthy weight**
5. **Be physically active each day**
6. **Manage diabetes.**

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

Women and Heart Attack

If you're a woman, you may not believe you're as vulnerable to a heart attack as men—but you are. Women account for nearly half of all heart attack deaths. Heart disease is the number one killer of both women and men.

There are differences in how women and men respond to a heart attack. Women are less likely than men to believe they're having a heart attack and more likely to delay in seeking emergency treatment.

Further, women tend to be about 10 years older than men when they have a heart attack. They are more likely to have other conditions, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and congestive heart failure—making it even more vital that they get proper treatment fast.

Women should learn the heart attack warning signs. These are:

- Pain or discomfort in the center of the chest.
- Pain or discomfort in other areas of the upper body, including the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Other symptoms, such as a shortness of breath, breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

If you feel heart attack symptoms, do not delay. Remember, minutes matter! Do not wait for more than a few minutes—5 minutes at most—to call 911.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

HEALTH INSURANCE QUESTIONS?
Call the Virginia Insurance Counseling &
Assistance Program (VICAP) at
703-324-5851.

SENIOR CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



These programs are administered by the Department of Community & Recreation Services, with the exceptions of the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church senior centers and the Gum Springs Community Center. If participation accommodations are needed in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, please call 703-324-5544 or TTY 703-222-9693 at least 10 working days in advance of the event. **All events are free unless otherwise noted.** The symbol RR means reservations are required. These are just a few of the activities offered. Call the center nearest you for a complete listing or if you have questions. **Senior Centers will be closed Monday, February 21.**

| | | |
|---|------------|--|
| <u>Bailey's</u> | Wednesdays | 11:00 a.m., Chair Exercise With Mindy. |
| <u>Bailey's Community Center</u> | Fridays | 10:30 a.m., Shopping Trips. |
| <u>5920 Summers Lane</u> | Mon. 2/7 | 12:30 p.m., CVS Pharmacist Discussion— <i>Blood Pressure</i> . |
| <u>Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041</u> | Mon. 2/14 | 12:30 p.m., Valentine Day Party. Music by David Lovins. |
| <u>Phone: 703-820-2131</u> | Wed. 2/16 | 11:30 a.m., Nutritionist Visit With Cathy Lina. |
| | Fri. 2/25 | 12:30 p.m., February Birthday Celebration. |

City of Fairfax
4401 Sideburn Road
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-359-2487

Call Center for Schedule.

| | | |
|---|------------|--|
| <u>City of Falls Church</u> | Tuesdays | 1st & 3rd, 9:45-11:30 a.m., Blood Pressure Screening. |
| <u>223 Little Falls Street</u> | Wed. 2/9 | 12:00 p.m., Birthdays With Beryl. |
| <u>(Next to City Hall)</u> | | 12:00 p.m., <i>Food Allergies</i> by Nutritionist George Matta. |
| <u>Falls Church, VA 22046</u> | Thur. 2/10 | 10:30-11:30 a.m., Prevention of Blindness Support Group. |
| <u>Phone: 703-248-5020/5021</u> | Mon. 2/14 | 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Valentine's Day Party. |
| | Tue. 2/22 | 9:30-10:30 a.m., <i>Use It or Lose It</i> by Sue Stone From Alzheimer's Family Day Center. |
| Reservations are required for all trips, programs, and guest speakers. | Wed. 2/23 | 10:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Tour of Coca-Cola Plant. |
| | Fri. 2/25 | 10:30-11:30 a.m., Armchair Travel—Northeast Brazil. |
| | Mon. 2/28 | 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Trip to National Museum of American Indian History. |

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|--------------------------------------|------------|---|
| <u>Franconia/Springfield</u> | Fri. 2/4 | 10:30 a.m., Line Dancing. \$5 for 8 Lessons. (RR) |
| <u>Lane Elementary School</u> | Thur. 2/10 | 10:00 a.m., Moose Lodge Party. (RR) |
| <u>7137 Beulah St.</u> | Mon. 2/14 | 12:30 p.m., Valentine's Party. Treats & Entertainment. (RR) |
| <u>Alexandria, VA 22315</u> | Tue. 2/15 | 12:30 p.m., CVS Speaker, <i>Skin Care</i> . |
| <u>Phone: 703-924-9762</u> | Wed. 2/23 | 12:30 p.m., Music With David Lovins. |

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|--|----------------|--|
| <u>Groveton at South County</u> | Mon./Wed./Fri. | 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Medium Impact Exercise. |
| <u>8350 Richmond Highway</u> | Thur. 2/3 | 12:30-1:00 p.m., Mindy's Chair Jazzercise. |
| <u>Ste. 325</u> | Fri. 2/4 | 1:00-1:30 p.m., CVS Healthwise: <i>Cholesterol</i> Workshop. |
| <u>Alexandria, VA 22309</u> | Thur. 2/10 | 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Franconia Moose Lodge Party. |
| <u>Phone: 703-704-6216</u> | Mon. 2/28 | 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Travel Training—DC Adventure. |

S E N I O R C E N T E R

Gum Springs

Gum Springs Community Center
8100 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306
Phone: 703-360-6088

| | |
|------------|---|
| Mondays | 10:00 a.m., Sewing and Quilting. |
| Tuesdays | 10:30 a.m., Ceramics. |
| Wednesdays | 10:30 a.m., Shopping/Bowling (Alexandria Bowling Center). |
| Thursdays | 1:00 p.m., Bingo. |
| Fridays | 10:00 a.m., Low-Impact Exercise. |

Hollin Hall

1500 Shenandoah Road
Alexandria, VA 22308
Phone: 703-765-4573

| | |
|------------|--|
| Fri. 2/4 | 1:00 p.m., AARP Mt. Vernon Chapter 3198 Meeting. |
| Wed. 2/9 | 1:00 p.m., Mount Vernon Police Station, Crime Prevention Specialists Lts. Greg Kottemann and Rick Cook. (RR) |
| Fri. 2/11 | 12:00 p.m., Sassy Red Hatter Valentine Party (Red Hat Guests/\$). (RR) |
| Mon. 2/14 | 1:00 p.m., Valentine Party With DJ Steve. (RR) |
| Thur. 2/24 | 10:00 a.m., <i>Easter Island: A Walking Tour</i> . Armchair Travel With Norm and Jane. (RR) |

James Lee

James Lee Community Center
2855 Annandale Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
Phone: 703-534-3387

| | |
|------------|--|
| Every Day | 11:00 a.m., Senior Computer Clubhouse. |
| Mondays | 10:30 a.m., Gentle Yoga. |
| Tuesdays | 10:00 a.m., Bridge. |
| | 10:00 a.m., Line Dancing (beginners). |
| | 10:30 a.m., Mosaic Craft Class. |
| Wednesdays | 1:00 p.m., Stretch for Flexibility. |
| Thursdays | 10:30 a.m., Line Dancing (advanced). |
| Fridays | 10:00 a.m., Movie Madness. |

Lewinsville

1609 Great Falls Street
McLean, VA 22101
Phone: 703-442-9075

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Tue.& Wed. 2/1 & 2/2 | 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Trip to Spy Museum. \$1. (RR) (inclement weather backup dates Feb. 15 & 16) |
| Mon. 2/7 | 12:15 p.m., CVS Talk on Cholesterol. |
| | 12:30-1:00 p.m., Blood Pressure Check. |
| Wed. 2/9 | 12:15-1:45 p.m., Chinese New Year's Celebration (includes Vietnamese and Korean New Years). |
| Mon. 2/14 | 12:00-1:00 p.m., Valentine's Day Party. |
| Thur. 2/24 | 12:15 p.m., Music by David and Gloria, Violin and Vocal. |

Lincolnia

4710 North Chambliss St.
Alexandria, VA 22312
Phone: 703-914-0223

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Fri. 2/4 | 1:00 p.m., Chinese New Year Celebration. (RR) |
| Tue. 2/8 | 10:30 a.m., Black History Program. (RR) |
| Tue. 2/8 | 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Blood Pressure Screening—Walk In. |
| Fri. 2/11 | 1:00 p.m., Sweethearts' Party. (RR) |
| Mon. 2/28 | 11:00 a.m., Pacific Scenes Travel Program. (RR) |

Little River Glen

4001 Barker Court
Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-503-8703

| | |
|------------|--|
| Tue. 2/08 | 11:00 a.m., Support Group With Frances. |
| Fri. 2/11 | 10:00 a.m., VIB (Visually Impaired & Blind) Support Group. |
| Thur. 2/17 | 11:00 a.m., Disaster Preparedness for Seniors. |
| | 1:00 p.m., Red Hat Society Chapter Meeting. |
| Tue. 2/22 | 10:00 a.m., Jazzercise Lite. (RR) |

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

| | | |
|--|------------|--|
| <u>Lorton</u> 7722 Gunston Plaza Lorton, VA 22079 Phone: 703-550-7195 | Thursdays | 10:15 a.m., Join Gold's Gym Personal Trainer for Exercise and Chair Yoga. (RR) |
| | Fri. 2/4 | 10:00 a.m., Trip: Woodrow Wilson Library. Movie <i>Seven Brides for Seven Brothers</i> . \$. (RR) |
| | Mon. 2/14 | 12:30 p.m., Valentine's Day & Birthday Cheers. Keyboard Music and Performance by Our Line Dance Class. |
| | Thur. 2/17 | 10:00 a.m., Trip: Old Town Hall Concert & Lunch: Thai Restaurant (Attn: Red Hats/ Tie Guys). \$ (RR) |
| | Tue. 2/22 | 12:00 p.m., It's Soup Day! Advisory Council Social (please bring vegetables for soup in morning). \$. (RR) |

| | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| <u>Pimmit Hills</u> 7510 Lisle Avenue Falls Church, VA 22043 Phone: 703-734-3338 | Mon. 2/7 | 11:00 a.m., Jazzercise Class. |
| | Fri. 2/11 | 1:00 p.m., Line Dancing Class. |
| | Wed. 2/16 | 11:00 a.m., Popcorn & Classic Movie. |
| | Wed. 2/23 | 10:30 a.m., Bingo Games. |
| | Fri. 2/25 | 1:00 p.m., Asian Arts Class. \$2. (RR) |

| | | |
|---|------------|---|
| <u>Reston-Herndon</u> 1850 Cameron Glen Drive Reston, VA 22091 Phone: 703-481-4200 | Thur. 2/3 | 11:00 a.m., Chinese New Year's Party. (RR) |
| | Tue. 2/8 | 12:30 p.m., CVS Presentation: <i>Insomnia</i> . |
| | Wed. 2/16 | 12:00 p.m., Sweethearts' Luncheon. \$. (RR) |
| | Tue. 2/22 | 1:00 p.m., Washington Birthday Celebration. |
| | Fri.. 2/25 | 10:30 a.m., Sally Hawkins Bingo. \$1. |

| | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| <u>Sully</u> 5690 Sully Road Centreville, VA 20124 Phone: 703-322-4475/4479 | Mon. 2/7 | 11:00 a.m., CVS Presentation: <i>Skin Care</i> . |
| | Fri. 2/11 | 12:45 p.m., Valentine Bingo. |
| | Tue. 2/15 | 12:30 p.m., Computer Basics With Mike. |
| | Mon. 2/14 | 10:30 a.m., Valentine's Tea. |
| | Mon. 2/28 | 11:00 a.m., Strength Training With Lynne. Bring 1-3-lb. Weights. |

| | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| <u>Wakefield</u> Audrey Moore RECenter 8100 Braddock Road Annandale, VA 22003 Phone: 703-321-3000 | Wed. 2/9 | 12:00 p.m., Anniversary Party. David on Accordion. (RR) |
| | Wed. 2/16 | 12:30 p.m., Paul Discusses Food Allergies. (RR) |
| | Tue. 2/22 | 11:00 a.m., Jeopardy With Marsha. (RR) |
| | Tue. 2/22 | 1:00 p.m., Presidents' Trivia. (RR) |
| | Fri. 2/25 | 11:00 a.m., <i>Telemarketing Investment Fraud</i> . (RR) |

Additional Locations for Meals/Other Activities

David R. Pinn
Community Center
10225 Zion Drive
Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-250-9181

Huntington Community
Center
5751 Liberty Drive
Alexandria, VA 22303
Phone: 703-960-1917

If you prefer the *Golden Gazette* in large print, call 703-324-5633.

FREE HOME REPAIRS

Fairfax County's Home Repair for the Elderly Program provides free home repairs to homeowners who are 62 or older, and/or handicapped or disabled; and have a maximum income of \$40,250 for 1 person*, or \$46,000 for 2 persons.*

Typical services include:

- Minor electrical repair
- Plumbing work
- Painting
- Repairing steps, floors, etc.
- Installing ramps and grab bars

Fairfax County Residents - Apply now for FREE REPAIRS

Call 703-246-5154 TTY: 703-385-3578

* Other restrictions apply.



intake. (Women of child-bearing age are a different story. They lose iron through menstruation and pregnancy, and therefore can become deficient unless they augment their intake.)

It follows therefore that any senior with iron deficiency anemia should be tested for causes of unrecognized bleeding. Most often this is due to insidious blood loss from the gastrointestinal tract from conditions like ulcers, gastritis, polyps, and colon cancer. Taking routine iron supplements might actually delay the recognition of such conditions. In addition, to simply treat known iron deficiency with supplements without investigating its cause is a potentially life-threatening mistake.

Myth #2: A blood test can tell if you are deficient in calcium.

Unlike most other minerals, the blood calcium level is almost always normal even in the face of severe calcium deficiency. The reason is that we all have a massive storehouse of calcium that reliably replenishes calcium in blood and body fluids through sensitive metabolic processes. That storehouse is bone, where 99% of the body's calcium resides. If we ingest too little calcium, we can rely on bone to supply the difference—but this comes with a price. Here's why.

Bone is a living organ that is constantly undergoing breakdown and rebuilding. In our early years, this "remodeling" of bone replaces the equivalent of a complete new skeleton every few years. Later in life remodeling slows down and bone breakdown prevails, causing our total bone mass to decline. The rate and severity of this decline is affected by many factors, but calcium intake is one of the most important. Insufficient dietary calcium accelerates bone breakdown and contributes to osteoporosis. So, even though blood calcium is normal, bone mass may become dangerously low. The result is a high risk of fractures. That's why adequate dietary calcium is so important throughout life.

Of course, there are indeed many diseases that do cause blood calcium concentrations to be too low or too high. They interfere with calcium metabolism by affecting calcium release from bone, excretion by the kidneys or absorption by the intestinal tract. But, even in these diseases the blood calcium levels don't necessarily reflect the body's total calcium load.

Myth #3: People on heart or blood pressure medications should be taking potassium.

The reason for this assumption is that many people with heart or blood pressure problems are taking diuretics ("water pills"). Certainly some diuretics do promote excretion of potassium by the kidneys, leading to low blood levels. Potassium is critical for proper functioning of the body's cells. It helps to regulate fluid balance and is essential for nerve, muscle, and heart functioning. Not only can potassium depletion make you feel bad, it can have very serious consequences.

On the other hand, some diuretics work in such a way that they actually increase potassium levels. Called potassium-sparing diuretics, these drugs often are prescribed to prevent potassium losses via the kidneys. In fact, they may be combined with other drugs in a single pill. In addition, certain heart and blood pressure medications tend to increase potassium levels somewhat. The best examples are two widely prescribed classes of drugs known as ACE inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers (including such brand names as Vasotec, Zestril, Altace, Diovan, Cozaar and others). Finally, impaired kidney function and certain other disorders can cause the body to retain potassium.

In all the foregoing cases, potassium supplements or potassium-rich foods can raise the concentrations in blood and body fluids to abnormal levels. Too much potassium is just as harmful as too little. Therefore, the only way to know if someone on diuretics needs potassium supplementation is to monitor blood levels periodically during treatment.

Monthly Support Groups

* The **Amputee Support Group of Northern Virginia** meets on the first Tuesday of every month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., at the Telestar Court Building, 2990 Telestar Ct., Gemini Room, Falls Church. Contact Irvin Axelrod at **703-222-7120** or *asgnva@earthlink.net*.

* The **Caregivers Support Group** meets on the first and third Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, 344 Courthouse Rd., SW, Vienna. Call **703-281-0538**.

* The **Fibromyalgia/Arthritis Support Group** meets on the second Thursday of the month, 1:00 p.m., at Sherwood Library, 2101 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Call Barbara at **703-913-0890**.

* The **Mended Hearts Support Group** meets on the first Wednesday of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., at the Telestar Court Building, 2990 Telestar Ct., Gemini Room, Falls Church. Contact John Braddon, **703-385-9694** or *jbraddon@cox.net*.

* The **Neuropathy Organization of Northern Virginia** meets on the second Saturday of the month, 1:30-3:30 p.m., at 2990 Telestar Court, Falls Church. Call Mary Baldrige, **703-491-6690**, or Joanne Holman, **703-998-8143**.

* The **Northern Virginia Post-Polio Support Group** meets on the second Saturday of each month, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at the Mason Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Call **703-560-8852**.

* The **Northern Virginia Support Group of the Well Spouse Foundation (WSF)** meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m., in Supervisor Bulova's Conference Room, at the Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The WSF supports spousal caregivers for the chronically ill or disabled. Call **703-425-2430**.

* The **Parkinson's Disease Care Partners Support Group** meets on the third Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Call **703-891-0821**.

* **Widow/Widower Support Groups** meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Sponsored by Haven of Northern Virginia, 4606 Ravensworth Road, Annandale. Call **703-941-7000**.

CHOCOLATE LOVERS FESTIVAL

FEBRUARY 5 & 6

The City of Fairfax's annual Chocolate Lovers Festival features activities for every member of the family. The 2-day festival will be held Saturday, February 5, and Sunday, February 6.

Events planned are the Taste of Chocolate, featuring chocolate vendors selling their wares to taste and purchase; the Chocolate Challenge, an arts extravaganza where the medium is chocolate; the Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, featuring chocolate chip pancakes; historic reenactments; children's activities; special events by the Fairfax City Regional Library; a craft show at Fire Station 3; open houses at historic buildings; and much more. Some events require a small fee, and other events are free. For information, call **703-385-1661**.

Tsunami Relief Scams

Recently, several versions of a scam e-mail have been circulated. All versions of this scam e-mail promote a relief fund effort for victims of the recent Tsunami and request monetary donations. Messages may appear to be from legitimate sources, such as the Red Cross or other reputable organizations. Please be alert to these types of scam messages. Other scams have cropped up on eBay, selling toys and jewelry and claiming the proceeds are for the Tsunami relief. If you wish to donate to charities, it is recommended that you seek out and contact the charity directly rather than reply to unsolicited e-mails you may receive.

The best way to make certain your donation gets to the victims is to deal directly with well-established charities such as the Red Cross.

EXPERT EXPRESS— NEW LIBRARY SERVICE

Do you belong to a local club, community group or civic organization? If so, the Library has a new service that can help you enhance your meetings. Expert Express offers free, 30-minute presentations to local groups on the following topics:

- Surviving Volunteer Boards
- Using Books to Help Children Through Troubled Times
- Free Genealogy and History Resources
- How to Design Business Brochures That Work
- Free Homework Help
- Seven Hot Books Coming Out Soon
- Preserving Your Family's Papers, Books, Videos and CDs
- Technology for Aging Eyes and Ears
- Leaving a Literary Legacy Through the Library Foundation
- How to Manage the Press
- How to Raise an Enthusiastic Reader.

Library experts also will bring library books that your members can check out at the meeting. Expert Express is free to Fairfax County clubs, groups, associations, agencies, and businesses.

Expert Express requests for meetings that occur in February or later are now being accepted. To request a speaker, call **703-324-8319** or e-mail Lois.Kirkpatrick@fairfaxcounty.gov.

If you have questions about aging services in Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church, call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at 703-324-7948 (TTY 703-449-1186) and ask to speak to an Aging Information Specialist. You also may visit the Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa.



Nominations for Volunteer Service Awards

Volunteer Fairfax is pleased to announce plans for the thirteenth annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards. This community-wide event honors individuals, businesses, and organizations throughout Fairfax County who give time and service to our community. The public is invited to nominate outstanding volunteers who provided distinguished community service in 2004.

Nominations are now being accepted for the award categories below.

- ♦ Direct Service Volunteer
- ♦ Community Leader
- ♦ Senior Volunteer (60 years or older)
- ♦ Youth Volunteer (22 years or younger)
- ♦ Corporate Volunteer Group
- ♦ Family Volunteer Group
- ♦ Adult Volunteer Group
- ♦ Youth Volunteer Group
- ♦ Volunteer Program.

The **deadline for submission of nominations is 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 18, 2005.**

For criteria or to download a nomination form, visit the Web site at www.volunteerfairfax.org (go to "Individual" then to "Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards"). To receive one by mail, call Erin Whyte at **703-246-3460**.

Dulles Chapter AARP Has New Meeting Schedule

After many years of Wednesday meetings, the Dulles AARP Chapter #4681 is changing to the fourth Monday of the month. The meeting time is still 7:00- 9 p.m., at the North County Governmental Building, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Guests and prospective members are always welcome. For more information on the meeting or on membership, call **703-758-1517**.

AARP Tax-Aide Program Updates

In the January issue (page 3), we published the sites for income tax assistance provided by AARP's Northern Virginia Tax-Aide Program. Since then, there have been some changes in hours of operations. SunTrust Bank in Vienna will have no evening hours, and its Saturday hours will be 9:00-11:00 a.m. The Mason District Government Center will operate 6:00-9:00 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. The phone number for appointments at Falcon's Landing is 703-404-5216. We are reprinting the list of locations with the changes incorporated in bold type:

Extended Operation Sites; Walk-In Clients

Mason District Government Center
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
Mon.-Fri., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Mon. and Thur., 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Sat., 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Sherwood Regional Library
2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria
Mon.-Fri., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Tue. and Thur., 5:00-8:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

SunTrust Bank of Vienna
515 Maple Ave., Vienna
Mon.-Fri., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Sat., 9:00-11:00 a.m.
No evening hours

Part-Time Sites

Centreville Regional Library
14200 St. Germaine Dr., Centreville
Tue. & Sat., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Walk-In Clients

Culpeper Garden Senior Center
4435 N. Pershing Drive, Arlington
Tue. and Fri., 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
By Appointment—Call 703-228-4403

Falcon's Landing Senior Residence
20225 Falcons Landing Circle, Sterling
Thur., 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Sat., 1:30-4:30 p.m.
By appointment—Call 703-404-5216

Manassas Senior Center

9320 Mosby St., Manassas
Mon. & Fri., 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
By Appointment—Call 703-792-6405

Reston Community Center

2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston
Tue. & Sat., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Thur., 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Walk-In Clients

Woodbridge Senior Center

2450 Longview Dr., Woodbridge
Wed. and Thur., 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
By Appointment—Call 703-494-5136

For additional information, call 1-888-AARP NOW (1-888-227-7669) or visit the Website at www.aarp.org/taxaide.

Note: The Worksheet for Federal Tax Form 1040 is available in large print by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

LET'S PLAY BALL!

It's time to get in shape for spring softball! Sign up for a 7-week Indoor Conditioning Program that begins February 22.

Northern Virginia Senior Softball (NVSS) seeks men 50+ and women 40+ (players' average age is 65) to play two 7-inning slow-pitch softball games on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, mid-April to mid-August, followed by Fall-Ball, on Fairfax County fields. NVSS has 27 teams organized into 3 skill-level conferences. Team assignments are based on your skill level.

The fee is \$70 for Fairfax residents, \$110 for nonresidents, and includes a team hat and T-shirt. To get the ball rolling for fun, fitness, and friendship, call Dave Scheele at **703-524-5576** or Joyce Pfeffer at **703-860-1876**.



FOR ALL HARRY POTTER FANS

The publishers of the sixth book in J.K. Rowling's series have announced that *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* will be released July 16, 2005. Within hours of the announcement, avid readers in Fairfax County began signing up on the library's waiting list to read the book when it comes in. When the shipment of Harry Potter VI is received in July, the books will go first to those on the list.

The previous Harry Potter novel worked its way through more than 1,600 fans before showing up on the shelves of the 21 branches. The library encourages fans to get on the list by putting the book "on hold" through its online catalog: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/catalog/index.htm>.

The library plans to buy 244 copies and lease another 244 copies. Leasing books allows the library to meet demand when best sellers are first released, and then return them once the frenzy subsides. There are plans to buy approximately 50 recorded versions on CD, about 20 copies each in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean, and a number in large print.

Volunteer Fairfax Donations Guide

Many organizations accept a wide variety of items as donations. Volunteer Fairfax maintains an online directory of needed goods and services of its registered agencies. Each category lists various agencies and their specific needs. Volunteer Fairfax can notify the agencies of the available donations and have them contact donors directly for more information. Here are the major donation categories: animal items, baby items, building & repair equipment, clothing, computers/accessories, food, health & hygiene, household items, medical equipment, office supplies, toys & entertainment, transportation, and miscellaneous items (cell phones, school supplies, other).

If you have items to donate that are not included in our guide, call **703-246-3460** or e-mail volrus@volunteerfairfax.org.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) Offers Tax Assistance

In addition to the AARP Tax-Aide program (see page 18), which offers free tax help to people age 60 and older, the Internal Revenue Service also sponsors another free tax assistance program called VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program).

The VITA Program offers free tax help to low-to-moderate-income (\$36,000 and below) people who cannot prepare their own tax returns. Military personnel and their families also may get free tax help!

The Chantilly and Pohick Regional libraries offer this program from February 2-April 14.

Chantilly Regional Library

4000 Stringfellow Rd.

Chantilly

703-502-3883

Pohick Regional Library

6450 Sydenstricker Rd.

Burke

703-644-7333

For all the dates/times, go to the library's Web site: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/taxes.htm>.



Looking for Fellows Who Like to Sing

The Songfellows is a group of senior men who perform choral songs in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, retirement homes, and adult day care centers. There is no charge for their performances.

The group's ages range from 66 to 95. The 95-year-old member goes everywhere he goes. In 2004 Songfellows received Best Group Award from Governor Warner and Best Group from Arlington County.

The group rehearses every Thursday from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Most concerts are on Thursday afternoons. Any men who can sing in harmony are invited to join the group for fun, relaxation, and friendship. Baritones and tenors are especially needed. Call Carl Black at **703-536-5160**.

How to Stay "IN TOUCH" With Older Relatives During a Crisis

Last year, thousands of Americans from coast to coast experienced natural disasters, and the new year does not seem to be getting off to a particularly good start. Eldercare Locator encourages families to map out a plan to keep their older relatives safe when disaster and personal crisis strikes.

"When an emergency occurs, there is no time to sit down and figure out what to do," said Sandy Markwood, CEO of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. "How will your aging relative signal for help if needed? Have arrangements been made for a friend or neighbor to check on them? Knowing that Mom and Dad have a plan in place in the event of an emergency will give everyone peace of mind."

The Eldercare Locator, a nationwide service funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging that links older consumers and their families to local aging services, has released an action plan, "IN TOUCH," to help families establish a strategy to assist older relatives in emergency situations. "IN TOUCH" was developed to help families initiate a discussion about ways to assist older relatives should an emergency occur.

Disaster and emergency situations can strike quickly and without warning, forcing immediate evacuations or even confining seniors to their homes. There are many reasons why older Americans must be prepared, including age-related characteristics, such as delayed response time or reduced ability to see or hear. Mental or physical impairments also can be barriers to quick response, as can chronic health problems, limited finances, and language and cultural differences. Families can cope with emergencies by preparing in advance for the worst-case scenarios.

Whether you live far away or are directly caring for your loved one, an "IN TOUCH" plan will aid your family communication efforts be-

fore, during, and after a crisis situation. Here are the basic steps to set up your personal program:

- Identify potential emergency situations and disasters that could occur in your older family member's home and community.
- Note what community resources are available that might assist your efforts in establishing your "IN TOUCH" plan.
- Talk about individual circumstances that are concerns for you and your older loved one.
- Outline your plan in writing and share it with everyone involved.
- Update your plan as situations change.
- Communicate regularly and test your plan.

"Older persons are very resilient, but they may need special help to overcome the adversities of disastrous events," said Josefina G. Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "An emergency preparedness plan is a must for all families, and this "IN TOUCH" plan addresses the special needs of older loved ones before a crisis occurs..."

For a copy of the "IN TOUCH" plan and to connect with the State or Area Agency on Aging that serves your relatives' community, contact the Eldercare Locator at **1-800-677-1116** or www.eldercare.gov.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

February 2-28. 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. daily except Tuesdays. Celebrate African-American History Month. See a special exhibit on the archaeological collection on the Sully slave quarters. Tours highlight daily lives of slaves 200 years ago. \$5/adult; \$4/student; \$3/ senior or child. **703-437-1794.**

February 7. 10:00 a.m. (refreshments at 9:30 a.m.) The topic of Lifetime Learning Institute's Monthly Forum is Public Opinion Polling in 2004: Strengths & Weaknesses, presented by Michael Dimock of Pew Research. Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. To register, call **703-503-0600.**

February 11. 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Gentle Yoga and Medi-tation Class. Learn breathing and focusing techniques that will prepare you for deep relaxation. Bring a sticky mat, blankets, and eye covers. Cheryl Harlan, Registered Yoga Instructor, Yoga Alliance. Residents/\$5; nonresidents/\$6.25. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., SE, Vienna. To register, call **703-255-6360.**

February 12. 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Used Book Sale. Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Rd., Alexandria. **703-768-6700.**

February 13. 5:00-7:00 p.m. Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Orchestra Presents

an Evening of Beethoven. Enjoy a full orchestral performance of beloved Beethoven pieces with renowned soloists. Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Rd., Alexandria. \$17-\$20. Call **703-799-8229** for details.

February 13 & 20. 12:00-2:00 p.m. Sugaring Time! Watch as sap is boiled down into sweet syrup over an open fire. Sample delicious maple syrup over fresh baked cornbread. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Rd., Great Falls. **703-759-2771.**

February 19 & 20. 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Breakfast With George Washington. Sample of George's favorite breakfast of hoecakes swimming in butter and honey. At 1:30 p.m., families may join America's Smallest Hometown Parade, complete with fife and drum corps; enjoy 18th century music; etc. \$11/adults; \$10.50/seniors; \$5/children (under 5/free). Mount Vernon is at the southern end of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. **703-780-2000.**

February 26. 10:00 a.m. Propagation Workshop: Start Plants From Seeds and Cuttings. Tammy Burke, horticulturist, shows you how to do it. Take home samples and handouts. Reservations required. \$5. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, Horticulture Bldg., 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Ct., Vienna. **703-255-3631.**

Providence Players Open *Twelve Angry Men*

On February 18th, The Providence Players of Fairfax, a local community theater troupe, return to the stage at the newly renovated theater at James Lee Community Center for three weekends, performing *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose, adapted by Sherman Sergel.

This classic drama takes place within the confines of a jury room on a hot summer day, as a jury of twelve very different men debate the evidence presented at the trial of a young man accused of murdering his father. You don't want to miss this literate, compelling story, which is as relevant today as it was when it was first performed in the late 1950s.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m., February 18, 19, 25, 26, and March 4 and 5. There is a matinee at 2:00 p.m. on February 27.

James Lee Community Center is at 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church (right off Arlington Boulevard). For directions, visit the Web site at: www.providenceplayers.org.

Tickets are \$15 (\$10 for seniors/students) and may be obtained by calling the ticket line at **703-425-6782**, by e-mail at providenceplayers@cox.net, or by writing to: Providence Players, PO Box 2393, Fairfax, Virginia 22031.